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Item 4 of the provisional agenda*

The role of the Economic and Social Council in the integrated and coordinated implementation of the outcomes of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits

Note by the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations**

I have the honour to transmit to the Economic and Social Council a report prepared by the Committee on World Food Security of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) on the progress in the implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action, highlighting its linkages with the coordinated and integrated follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits undertaken by the United Nations system.

Implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action: report of the Committee on World Food Security through the FAO Council to the Economic and Social Council

Introduction

1. In its decision 1999/212, the Economic and Social Council invited the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to transmit to the Council every four years, starting in 1999, a report prepared by the Committee on World Food Security on progress in the implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action, highlighting its linkages with the coordinated and integrated follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits undertaken by the United Nations system.
2. At its twenty-fifth session (Rome, 31 May-3 June 1999), the Committee considered and approved a reporting format as a basis for all future reporting on the

* E/2003/100.

** The fact that the Committee on World Food Security concluded its work on 16 May 2003 explains the late submission of the present document.



progress of the implementation of the Plan of Action. Based on that format, the Committee reviewed the first cluster of commitments relating to people-centred objectives, i.e., commitments one, two and five and relevant parts of commitment seven. At its twenty-eighth session, in September 2002, the Committee subsequently reviewed the second cluster, consisting of those related to the development-centred objectives, i.e., commitments three, four and six and relevant parts of commitment seven.

3. The present report consists of extracts from a number of Committee reports, including the "Declaration of the World Food Summit: five years later", and the decisions of the Committee with regard to the two sets of reviews conducted in 2000 and 2002, as reflected in the report of the Committee to the Council and the related comments of the Council as reflected in Council reports.

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Extract from Committee on World Food Security document CL 119/14

(paras. 19-30)

Reports received

19. Ninety-one countries and 9 international organizations submitted reports on the implementation of WFS Plan of Action. The Secretariat had synthesised the wealth of detail contained in these reports under a number of key issues relating to Commitments I, II and V and relevant parts of Commitment VII (the people-centred commitments). The clarity and brevity of this synthesis was appreciated. However this had led to the omission of certain important issues discussed below. Although actions had been reported in some detail the document also lacked analysis of the results of actions taken.

20. Reports from the important discussions held at each of the FAO regional conferences on the subject of Follow-up to the World Food Summit were also available to the Committee.

Multidimensional nature of WFS follow-up

21. The multidimensional nature of the follow-up to the World Food Summit included actions at the national, intergovernmental and inter-agency levels, by governmental, inter-governmental, non-governmental and civil society actors. Reiterating that the international community, and the UN system, including FAO, as well as other agencies and bodies according to their mandates, have important contributions to the implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action, some delegates regretted the reduction in the budget of FAO and other international agencies. Several delegates emphasized that the zero growth in FAO budget has constrained the Organization's capacity to assist developing countries.

Actions taken towards poverty reduction and food security

22. Several countries provided additional information of the measures they had taken to implement the Plan and to reduce poverty and the number of the undernourished. They re-iterated their strong commitment to the WFS Plan of Action.

23. The intergovernmental organisations that addressed the Committee were all cognizant of the WFS goals and were paying heed to food security concerns in their strategic plans. The fight against poverty is common ground for all agencies. The Committee lauded the recent reaffirmation by the UN Millennium Summit of the WFS target of halving the number of undernourished by 2015 along with halving extreme poverty by the same date.

24. The WFS has in fact stimulated many countries to develop food security programmes, policies and institutions to allow meeting the target in time. FAO's assistance in this area was acknowledged and appreciated, and its coordinating role was highlighted.

Reporting on the use of food as an instrument of political and economic pressure

25. It was noted that although the Rome Declaration on World Food Security had stated, and it had been repeated at various FAO events, that food should not be used as an instrument of political and economic pressure, the document did not report on this matter. The Committee reaffirmed the importance of the Rome Declaration and the World Food Summit Plan of Action, in general, and in relation with this theme.

Rights-based approach to summit follow-up

26. Referring to the Summit's reaffirmation of the right of everyone to have access to safe and nutritious food, consistent with the right to adequate food and the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger, the Committee reaffirmed the importance of continuing the consolidation of this important issue in the relevant UN body, with the active participation of FAO.

Gender mainstreaming and empowerment of women

27. The Committee stressed the importance of gender in food security, which is a crucial objective for achieving Commitment One, but which was not sufficiently highlighted in the document.

FAO actions to implement Summit Plan of Action

28. Referring to the lead role of FAO among international agencies in implementing the WFS Plan of Action, several delegates regretted that the document provided insufficient information on FAO's actions.

Other aspects facilitating achievement of food security goals

29. The facilitation of the achievement of food security goals in many developing countries through enhanced access to world markets for their exports and through the pursuit of sustainable agricultural and rural development was raised during the current session of the Committee and will be addressed during the second phase of the review of the Summit Plan of Action.

B. RECOMMENDATIONS

30. On the basis of its findings and conclusions reported above the Committee made the following recommendations:

With regard to Governments

- identify limitations and constraints in the implementation of the Plan of Action;
- in addition to reporting on actions taken to implement the WFS Plan of Action, indicate the results of these actions in future country reports;
- enhance efforts to improve the enabling environment, including where necessary through democratisation and good governance;
- step up efforts on poverty eradication and improvement of food security through development of appropriate policies, pro-poor institutions and increased allocation of resources;
- enhance policies and programmes to achieve gender mainstreaming and empowerment of women;
- investigate the scope for improving food supplies through reduction of post-harvest losses.

With regard to the international community

- enhance the flow of financial and technical assistance to developing countries to help them implement the WFS Plan of Action;
- continue to implement international agreements and decisions relating to easing the burden of external debt for developing countries, particularly the HIPC countries; expedite debt relief especially in the case of low income food deficit countries affected by calamities;
- provide FAO and other international organizations dealing with food security with adequate budgets;
- strengthen assistance to prevent and reduce the impact of natural and man-made disasters.

With regard to the FAO secretariat

- in future progress reports, ensure that the process of synthesis identifies all important issues and highlights positive and replicable examples;

- further improve indicators including through better identification of the poor and vulnerable groups and by incorporating data on employment and income, gender disaggregated data, anthropometric data and other factors determining the food security status of individuals and households;
- report on the incidence of HIV/AIDS and monitor its impact on food security;
- monitor and report on the food security status of women at national and household levels;
- improve coverage in future reporting on action by non-governmental and civil society partners of governments and international institutions;
- continue to play a lead role, interacting actively with other agencies and international organisations, in promoting world food security;
- provide further capacity-building assistance to developing countries and countries in transition to be able to satisfy the standards required for access to world markets, through enhanced activities related to Codex Alimentarius, the IPPC and the OIE.

With regard to international institutions

- prepare future assessment reports as a collaborative process among concerned international agencies;
- strengthen collaboration among UN agencies in the implementation of the WFS Plan of Action;
- through collaboration between FAO and WHO, enhance measures to tackle food borne diseases.

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Extract from Committee on World Food Security document CL/123/10

(paras. 12-27)

A. REPORTING PROCESS AND RESULTS

12. The Committee reviewed the progress in the implementation of "development-centred" Objectives (i.e. Commitments III, IV, VI and relevant parts of Commitment VII) of the WFS Plan of Action on the basis of document CFS: 2002/3. It commended the Secretariat for the quality of the document. However it regretted that only less than one third of FAO member countries reported in time.
13. The report could have been more informative and relevant if all national reports had been more quantitative and analytical and included the activities of civil society. In the future the national reports should specially provide information on the relative priority of agriculture and food security programmes in national budgets and the impact of those programmes on hunger reduction.
14. Several delegates provided additional information on the measures their countries had taken to implement the WFS Plan of Action and to reduce poverty and the number of the undernourished. They reiterated their respective country's commitment to the WFS Plan of Action.

B. THE NEED FOR AN EXPLICIT GENDER PERSPECTIVE

15. Although women are the main contributors to food production in developing countries, they are often excluded from decision making and access to resources. Gender inequality is one of the main obstacles to food security, and measures to overcome it need to be reflected better in future reports.

C. ESSENTIAL CONDITIONS FOR ACHIEVING THE WFS OBJECTIVE

16. Factors determining success in reducing food insecurity were identified. They include: political and economic stability, good governance, the rule of law, broad based participation, an appropriate policy

environment and adequate institutions; priority for agriculture and sustainable rural development in the national economic development strategy; importance of national food production; effective research, extension, marketing and credit services to support small farmers; decentralization of decision-making and greater private sector and NGO and CSO involvement in service provision; development of appropriate water management; effective land use planning and use of soil and climate; improvement of infrastructure and communication links.

17. Conservation of and access to plant genetic resources are crucial for sustainable agriculture and the livelihood of rural communities as well as for food security of nations as a whole. The adoption of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture in November 2001 was a positive step towards this end.

D. CONSTRAINTS TO IMPROVING FOOD SECURITY

18. Wars and conflicts, the spread of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, and recurring incidence of natural disasters, including the outbreak of animal and plant diseases, not only worsen food insecurity and cause considerable human suffering over the short-term but also disrupt long-term development efforts to eradicate poverty, often leading to setbacks in the food security status and overall standard of living of communities.

E. IMPORTANCE OF SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES FOR FOOD SECURITY

19. The Reykjavik Conference on Responsible Fisheries in the Maritime Ecosystems, organized jointly by FAO and Iceland, was important in enhancing the contribution of fishery to food security.

F. TRADE AND FOOD SECURITY

20. Several delegates stressed that successful progress towards the WFS goal to reduce poverty and hunger depends not only on sound domestic policies and action programmes but also on an open and fair international trading system. In this connection they stressed that food, agricultural trade and overall trade policies still needed to be made more coherent and conducive to fostering food security.

21. The hope was expressed that the ongoing trade negotiations would provide more opportunities for all countries to benefit from a fair, open, rules-based and market-oriented world trade system and to this end a call was made for an ambitious outcome from the negotiations made under the Doha Development Agenda.

G. RIGHT TO FOOD

22. Many Members commended FAO and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights for having worked closely in line with commitment 7.4 of the WFS Plan of Action regarding the right to adequate food. Several delegates stated that the next step should be to develop an international code of conduct on the right to adequate food, which would be an instrument to help countries fulfil their obligations in the context of achieving the WFS goals. Other countries stated that they did not support developing an international code of conduct because, among other reasons, it was unlikely to significantly contribute to food security.

H. GLOBAL ALLIANCE AGAINST HUNGER

23. Several delegates welcomed the idea of a global coalition against hunger. They stressed that meaningful progress towards meeting the WFS target requires that all development partners redouble their efforts and work together in an alliance against hunger based on sound principles.

I. OFFICIAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE

24. Several delegates expressed concern that the limited capacity of their countries to raise financial resources was aggravated by debt burden and by the downward trend in ODA to agriculture. The need for reversing the decline of ODA is in line with the Monterrey consensus. In this connection, some delegates underlined that international aid is only part of the solution to hunger. They stressed that a better policy environment is the first and most important element to unlock the potential of private investment and to allow aid to achieve results.

J. BIOTECHNOLOGY

25. Some delegates pointed out that there is an emergent need to monitor developments in the field of biotechnology. They stressed the need to strengthen national capacities to conduct risk management on GM products and to assess environmental biosafety of GMOs. Some delegates emphasized the importance of agricultural research and technology, including biotechnology, for improving food security by enhancing agricultural productivity and sustainable use of natural resources.

K. CLIMATE CHANGE

26. Several delegates stressed the important linkages between climate change and food security. In this connection one delegation referred to a study on food security and climate change undertaken by the International Institute for Systems Application Analysis in Laxenburg, Austria. The impact of climate change is more visible on marginal lands.

L. RECOMMENDATIONS

27. The Committee made the following recommendations to be pursued by FAO:

- undertake further and more comprehensive analysis for the understanding of the causes of food insecurity, the livelihood strategies of poor people and the impact of different policies, drawing upon the information available through FIVIMS;
- work together with other organizations of the UN system and OECD to agree on the same set of indicators for the monitoring of the MDGs on poverty and hunger, as well as the WFS target, and agree on a division of work among agencies;
- provide assistance to developing countries, through training and capacity building, to participate more effectively in international trade negotiations;
- continue to take a pro-active role in assessing the impact of climate change on agriculture and food security;
- continue to work on Farm Animal Genetic Resources, focussing attention on the possible contributions to food security.

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Extract from Committee on World Food Security document CL/119/REP

(paras. 9-17)

9. The Council expressed appreciation that the format of the report of the Twenty-sixth Session of the Committee on World Food Security was focused, concise and reflected enhanced clarity in highlighting the main issues regarding both the world food security situation and implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action. The Council endorsed the report of the Committee including its conclusions and recommendations.

10. The Council expressed concern that progress in the implementation of the WFS Plan of Action and the pace of decline in the number of undernourished was too slow to achieve the World Food Summit (WFS) objective of reducing the number of undernourished people by half by the year 2015. It underlined that if the present trends continued, the WFS target might not be attained by 2015. The Council recognized that to achieve the WFS target, the number of undernourished would have to decline at least at an average of 20 million people a year, and stressed that more needed to be done at all levels to improve food security and to accelerate the pace of decline in the number of undernourished.

11. In this connection, the Council fully supported the recommendations of the Committee as contained in paragraph 30 of the Report and called upon Governments, the international community and the FAO Secretariat to

implement the recommendations effectively. The Council emphasized that the difficult challenge of hunger and undernutrition required combined and coordinated efforts at all levels.

12. The Council noted that the increase in frequency and severity of food emergencies owing to armed conflicts and natural disasters, the incidence of HIV/AIDS and the heavy debt burden affected the capacity of a number of developing countries to implement the WFS Plan of Action. It also expressed concern over the growing incidence of food-borne diseases and zoonosis.

13. The Council noted with satisfaction the Declaration adopted by the UN Millennium Summit and appreciated the reaffirmation by that Assembly of the WFS target of halving undernutrition by 2015, along with halving extreme poverty within the same timeframe. It underlined that the Millennium Declaration reinforced an integrated and coordinated approach to tackle poverty and food insecurity. It therefore stressed the need for FAO to ensure its participation in the implementation of the Millennium Declaration and to assume a leading role in promoting a coordinated approach in the implementation of the WFS commitments. The Council requested that, at its next session, the Director-General report on FAO's contribution, within the UN System, on progress in the implementation of those provisions of the Millennium Declaration falling within its mandate.

14. The Council noted with satisfaction that commendable efforts had been made with regard to the Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping System (FIVIMS) initiative, and that a number of countries had begun to implement FIVIMS at national level. It recognized, however, that the implementation of FIVIMS at national level suffered from a lack of adequate resources. The Council supported the set of recommendations to strengthen FIVIMS put forward in paragraph 39 by the Committee on World Food Security. In particular, the Council emphasized the need for an enhanced allocation of resources for the development of the system at national level in all the regions.

15. Several Members emphasized their support for the idea of the development of a Code of Conduct on the Right to Adequate Food, and reiterated that the right to adequate food was indivisible from other human rights. In this connection, they pointed out the importance of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the need for better reporting from Member Nations, as well as FAO, on their respective activities relevant in this regard. The Council also reiterated its view that food should not be used as an instrument for political and economic pressure as stated in the Report of CFS. A number of Members urged the Director-General to give appropriate consideration to the consultations under UNGA Resolution A/55/L.7.

16. The Council expressed support for the FAO Special Programme for Food Security (SPFS). At the same time, the Council recalled that an evaluation was to be carried out on the SPFS at the end of the cropping season of 2001, and looked forward to the results.

17. Several members expressed appreciation of the support given to them by FAO in their efforts to improve their food security, and requested that FAO continue its support in capacity-building and other forms of technical assistance. In this connection, they emphasized the need to increase the budget of FAO. A certain number of Members expressed the wish that FAO become more involved in making the international community more aware of the key role played by agriculture in strategies for combating poverty, agriculture being the main activity for poor people living in rural areas. Some Members also endorsed the efforts of the CFS to promote greater involvement of civil society in its work, as highlighted in the CFS report.

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Extract from Committee on World Food Security document CL/123/REPORT/REV

(paras. 17-19)

17. The Council regretted that the relatively low rate of decline in the number of undernourished was disappointingly low. Recognizing the need to move from awareness to more concrete action, the Council endorsed the Report of the CFS and stressed that Governments and FAO should do their utmost to implement in particular

the conclusions and recommendations contained in paragraphs 11 and 17 of the Report. Some Members suggested that FAO should maintain a tracking system to monitor the implementation of the recommendations.

18. In supporting the recommendations of the CFS, the Council underlined that particular emphasis should be placed *inter alia* on measures to reduce environmental degradation, soil and water conservation. The Council stressed the importance of FAO continuing to support capacity-building in the area of international food safety standards and agricultural trade negotiations. The importance of food security information systems was also highlighted with a call for coordination with other UN System organizations, particularly in relation to the Millennium Development Goals.

19. The Council reiterated the view that improving food security was primarily a responsibility of national governments. The responsibility of the international community in enabling the implementation of the WFS Plan of Action was also underlined. The Council also confirmed that food aid could play a positive role in support of food security, while stressing that it should not undermine incentives for domestic food production.

IV. DECLARATION OF THE WORLD FOOD SUMMIT: five years later¹

INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE AGAINST HUNGER

We, the Heads of State and Government, or our representatives, assembled in Rome at the World Food Summit: *five years later* (WFS:fyf) at the invitation of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO);

Recalling the World Food Summit (WFS) held in Rome in November 1996 at which Heads of State and Government, or their representatives, adopted the Rome Declaration on World Food Security and the WFS Plan of Action and pledged their political will and their common and national commitment to achieving food security for all and to an ongoing effort to eradicate hunger in all countries, with an immediate view to reducing the number of undernourished people to half their level no later than 2015;

Recognizing the urgent need to reinforce the efforts of all concerned partners as an international alliance against hunger, for the fulfilment of the objectives of the 1996 Summit;

Reaffirming the right of everyone to have access to safe and nutritious food;

Reiterating that food should not be used as an instrument for political and economic pressure and reaffirming the importance of international cooperation and solidarity as well as the necessity of refraining from unilateral measures not in accordance with the international law and the Charter of the United Nations and that endanger food security;

Reaffirming the commitments that we assumed with the Rome Declaration and Plan of Action, which taking into consideration the multifaceted character of food security, encompass national action and effective international efforts to supplement and reinforce national action;

Acknowledging the considerable efforts which have been made in many countries to reduce poverty and improve food security, and recognizing the commitment of the international community to assisting this effort as expressed in the United Nations Millennium Declaration;

Noting that the average annual rate of reduction in the number of undernourished people in the world was eight million and that if this trend continues, the WFS target of reducing the number of the undernourished by half by 2015, reaffirmed by the Millennium Declaration, will not be attained;

¹ When "Government" is used, it means as well the European Community within its areas of competence. Of 180 participating delegations (179 countries and the European Community), 34 were represented at the level of Head of State, 9 at the level of Deputy Head of State, 17 at the level of Head of Government, 12 at the level of Deputy Head of Government, 1 at the level of Crown Prince, 96 at the level of Minister and 11 at the level of Ambassador or other. In addition, 191 other high-level representatives (including 109 Ministers and 82 Vice-Ministers and Under-secretaries) participated in the Summit as members of the delegations of the participating countries.

Noting that hunger is both a cause and an effect of extreme poverty, and prevents the poor from taking advantage of development opportunities, that hunger eradication is a vital step in alleviating poverty and inequality, and that the international community has restated its commitment to the reduction of poverty. Observing further that 70 percent of the world's poor live in rural areas and depend almost entirely on agriculture and rural development for their livelihood; and noting the rapid increase in the numbers and proportion of urban people affected by poverty, hunger and malnutrition;

Conscious of the particular difficulties faced by all developing countries, in particular by the least developed countries (LDC), the low-income food-deficit countries (LIFDC), the small island developing states, and countries affected by violent conflicts, civil strife, land mines and unexploded ordnance, or exposed to desertification and natural disasters; noting further that global warming and climate change can have serious implications for food and livelihood security, especially in these countries;

Recognizing also the difficulties faced by the countries with economies in transition in addressing their food security needs in the process of conducting market-oriented reforms;

Concerned with the current estimates of the overall downward trend in the national budgets of developing countries and the decline in Official Development Assistance (ODA) and International Financial Institutions (IFIs) portfolios directly allocated for agriculture and rural development, as a contribution to food security;

Recognizing the important role of food assistance in situations of humanitarian crisis as well as an instrument for development, acting as an enabling pre-investment;

Reaffirming Commitment 4 of the WFS Plan of Action that trade is a key element in achieving world food security;

Reaffirming the fundamental importance of national production and distribution of food, sustainable agriculture and rural development, fisheries and forestry, in achieving food security;

Reiterating our deep concern at the debt burden on developing countries in particular the heavily indebted poor countries, and at its negative impact on resources for food security, in spite of progress in implementing the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative;

Recognizing that international economic and financial crises have shown dramatically the vulnerability of developing countries;

Noting with concern the acute threat of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, and the incidence of malaria, tuberculosis and other diseases, in particular those caused by water contamination in developing countries, and their devastating impact on food security;

Reaffirming our commitment to the Monterrey Consensus, which referenced the need to develop effective partnerships between developed and developing countries, based on the recognition of national leadership and ownership of development plans that embody poverty reduction strategies, and recognizing the value of exploring innovative sources of finance provided that those sources do not unduly burden developing countries, as important steps towards achieving sustainable food security;

Recognizing the importance of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture in support of food security objectives;

Noting the outcomes of the world conferences, including the International Conference on Financing for Development, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Special Sessions on HIV/AIDS in 2001 and on Children in 2002 and the 4th Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization (WTO) at Doha, and highlighting the forthcoming World Summit on Sustainable Development of 2002.

Political will

1. We renew our global commitments made in the Rome Declaration at the World Food Summit in 1996 in particular to halve the number of hungry in the world no later than 2015, as reaffirmed in the United Nations Millennium Declaration. We resolve to accelerate the implementation of the WFS Plan of Action.

2. We call on all parties (governments, international organizations, civil society organizations and the private sector) to reinforce their efforts so as to act as an international alliance against hunger to achieve the WFS targets no later than 2015. With this aim, parties should promote coordinated action. Bearing in mind the contribution of all parties, countries should continue to report on progress to the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), within its mandate as a focal point for the implementation of the WFS Plan of Action.
3. We recognize that progress had not been adequate to reach the WFS target. Recognizing that responsibility for assuring national food security rests with national governments in cooperation with civil society and the private sector and with the support of the international community, we resolve to accelerate implementation of action to halve hunger by no later than 2015. This requires a rate of hunger reduction of more than 22 million per year on average.
4. We stress that poverty reduction and food security strategies should, inter alia, include measures to increase agricultural productivity, food production and distribution. We agree to promote equal access for men and women to food, water, land, credit and technology which will also help in generating income and creating employment opportunities for the poor, thus contributing to reduction of poverty and hunger.
5. We reaffirm the importance of strengthening the respect of all human rights and fundamental freedoms including the right to development, democracy, the rule of law, good governance, sound economic policies, the equality of rights for all without distinction as to sex, race, language, religion, the resolution of conflicts in accordance with the UN Charter and respect for international humanitarian law, and international cooperation so as to solve economic, social, cultural and humanitarian problems, which are essential for achieving food security.
6. We call upon the concerned development partners to exert all necessary efforts to achieve the international development goals of the Millennium Declaration, particularly, those related to halving poverty and hunger by 2015, to improve and strengthen the indicators necessary for measuring progress and to monitor progress within their mandate; and to renew and strengthen the commitment to national and international systems in place to assess food security. We reaffirm the role of FAO, with World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF in monitoring progress towards the Millennium Development Goal on hunger and the importance of the Inter-Agency Working Group on FIVIMS (Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping Systems) in strengthening national and international monitoring of food security.
7. The vast majority of the hungry and those living in absolute poverty are in rural areas. We recognize that reaching the goal of halving the number of hungry requires that the most food insecure and impoverished countries promote the alleviation of rural poverty especially through sustained growth of agricultural production, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa.
8. We reconfirm that FAO has a major role to play in assisting countries to implement the provisions of the WFS Plan of Action within its mandate, keeping in mind that the WFS entrusted the Committee on World Food Security to monitor progress.
9. We believe that broad international partnerships are of utmost importance for the implementation of the WFS Plan of Action. We call on governments, the international organizations and financial institutions to utilize their resources effectively, to improve their performance and strengthen cooperation and to undertake joint efforts to combat hunger, and reinforce the key role of sustainable agriculture and rural development in food security.
10. We invite the FAO Council to establish at its One Hundred and Twenty-third Session an Intergovernmental Working Group, with the participation of stakeholders, in the context of the WFS follow-up, to elaborate, in a period of two years, a set of voluntary guidelines to support Member States' efforts to achieve the progressive realisation of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security; we ask the FAO, in close collaboration with relevant treaty bodies, agencies and programmes of the UN System, to assist the Intergovernmental Working Group, which shall report on its work to the Committee on World Food Security.
11. We specifically urge governments to review their ongoing national food security policies with a view to filling gaps, identifying new initiatives, removing implementation obstacles and streamlining inter-ministerial and inter-departmental policy initiatives.

12. We reaffirm the Monterrey Consensus and we urge all members of the WTO to implement the outcome of the Doha Conference, especially the commitments regarding the reform of the international agricultural trading system, with particular reference to paragraphs 13 and 14, given that international agricultural trade has a role to play, consistent with Commitment 4 of the WFS Plan of Action, in promoting economic development, alleviating poverty and achieving the objectives of the World Food Summit, in particular in developing countries.

Challenges

13. We reaffirm the need to assure gender equality and to support empowerment of women. We recognize and value the continuing and vital role of women in agriculture, nutrition and food security and the need to integrate a gender perspective in all aspects of food security; and we recognize the need to adopt measures to ensure that the work of rural women is recognized and valued in order to enhance their economic security, and their access to and control over resources and credit schemes, services and benefits.

14. We emphasize the need for nutritionally adequate and safe food and highlight the need for attention to nutritional issues as an integral part of addressing food security. The recent UNGA Special Session on Children addressed the need for investments in basic economic and social infrastructure and social services, as well as social protection for vulnerable and disadvantaged groups. Attention should be given to improving the quality of diet; access to potable water, health care, and education; and sanitation. We recognize the importance of interventions to tackle micro-nutrient deficiencies which are cost-effective and locally acceptable.

15. We reaffirm our pledge to the fight against world-wide conditions that pose severe health threats, and especially the spread of HIV/AIDS, which can have a uniquely devastating impact on all sectors and levels of society and consequently on food security. This requires new approaches, technologies and crops for labour-deficient HIV/AIDS-affected farming households. In this regard, we welcome the establishment of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, which constitutes an important step forward for concerted action at country level, as well as for the mobilization of new and additional resources aimed at the prevention and treatment of these diseases.

16. We reaffirm the important role of Codex Alimentarius, the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) and the Office International des Epizooties (OIE) to provide effective, science-based, internationally-accepted standards of food safety, plant and animal health, as well as to facilitate international food and agricultural trade in their role as the WTO Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS)-recognized standard-setting bodies.

17. We pledge to continue to support efforts to strengthen developing countries' capacity with respect to the management of food safety and plant and animal health.

18. We should strengthen national and international action to prepare for contingencies and emergencies, and to improve the effectiveness of emergency actions both through food and non-food based intervention. These actions must be integrated into sustainable development efforts with all stakeholders involved to achieve sustainable food security. We underscore the importance of developing the scope and coverage of social protection mechanisms, in particular of safety nets for vulnerable and food insecure households. We are committed to ensuring, through economic development, the use of early warning systems, and emergency assistance, that famine will never again be seen.

19. We recognize the merit of school feeding as a social development programme. It should be based on local or regional purchase where possible, and managed in a way to respect local consumption habits. In this regard, we encourage the development of the World Food Programme's (WFP's) school feeding programmes, among others, when implemented in accordance with national priorities and educational programmes.

20. We resolve to contribute to the outcome of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, recognizing the important role of the three Rome-based organizations, FAO, WFP and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and to strengthen coordination and cooperation among national and international organizations, in order to make efficient use of resources, particularly in the areas of technical and financial

cooperation, sustainable management of natural resources, fighting transboundary animal and plant diseases and securing food safety.

21. We stress the need to further promote sustainable forest and fisheries management, including sustainable use and conservation of aquatic living resources, in view of the contribution of those sectors to food security and poverty eradication.

22. We stress the importance of supporting alternative development activities that enable people engaged in illicit crop cultivation to reach sustainable food security and live in dignity.

23. Recognizing the extent of poverty in the mountain zones, we emphasize the vital role of mountain zones and their potential for sustainable agriculture and rural development in order to achieve food security. We stress the need to build partnerships between developing and developed countries in this regard.

24. We pledge to work in the spirit of cooperation and solidarity to strengthen FAO activities, within its mandate, that enable the developing countries and countries with economies in transition to meet food safety issues, to make better use of the benefits of research and technologies and to respond effectively to the challenges and opportunities of globalization, in particular with respect to agriculture and food security. We also pledge to assist those countries, particularly their food producers, to make informed choices about, and to have access to, the necessary scientific and technical knowledge related to these new technologies targeted at poverty and hunger reduction.

25. We call on the FAO, in conjunction with the CGIAR and other international research institutes, to advance agricultural research and research into new technologies, including biotechnology. The introduction of tried and tested new technologies including biotechnology should be accomplished in a safe manner and adapted to local conditions to help improve agricultural productivity in developing countries. We are committed to study, share and facilitate the responsible use of biotechnology in addressing development needs.

26. We recognize that the developing countries and countries in economic transition are facing difficulties in responding to the challenges and opportunities of globalization, in particular with respect to agriculture and food security, and we therefore agree in a spirit of cooperation and solidarity to consolidate FAO activities, in support of these countries to enable them to cope with the challenges and reap the benefits of globalization.

Resources

27. We call on all Member States, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, the private sector and all other partners in development to consider voluntary contributions to the FAO Trust Fund for Food Security and Food Safety and other voluntary instruments. The Trust Fund should serve as a catalyst for accelerating food production and improving food access in LDCs, LIFDCs and Small Island Developing States, and for the prevention, control and eradication of transboundary pests and plant and animal diseases, and the preparation of investment projects, and South-South cooperation, in the aforementioned areas.

28. We stress the inherent linkage between rapid progress towards the targets of the World Food Summit Plan of Action, as reaffirmed by the United Nations Millennium Declaration, and the size, direction and efficient use of investment in food security, agriculture, rural development, food production, processing and distribution. As we agreed in the Monterrey Consensus, mobilizing domestic and international resources to reach those objectives, is contingent on several factors, inter alia: (i) an enabling environment for savings and investment in rural areas within the framework of a sound national macroeconomic system, (ii) a broad-based national poverty reduction strategy aiming at improving access to food including through increasing food production and distribution, (iii) promoting opportunities for internal and external private investment, (iv) trade, (v) adequate attention in the national budget towards social-economic development, (vi) complementing national efforts with ODA in critical areas of social infrastructure and human development and (vii) transparent and effective management of public resources.

29. We urge developed countries that have not done so to make concrete efforts towards the target of 0.7% of Gross National Product (GNP) as ODA to developing countries, and 0.15% to 0.20% of GNP of developed countries to least developed countries, as reconfirmed at the Third United Nations Conference on Least

Developed Countries, and we encourage developing countries to build on progress achieved in ensuring that ODA is used effectively to help achieve development goals and targets. We acknowledge the efforts of all donors, commend those donors whose ODA contributions exceed, reach or are increasing towards the targets, and underline the importance of undertaking to examine the means and timeframes for achieving the targets and goals.

30. We welcome the adoption of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), and the inclusion of agriculture and food security as a component of this initiative. We invite the international community to respond to this initiative by financing programmes or projects, in the most appropriate manner, that reflect NEPAD principles and commitments.

31. We will encourage the international community to continue to provide technical and financial assistance to the countries with economies in transition with a view to fostering their food security.

32. With a view to reversing the overall decline of agriculture and rural development in the national budgets of developing countries, in ODA and in total lending in international financial institutions, we call for an adequate share for those sectors of bilateral and multilateral ODA, lending by IFIs and budgetary allocations of developing countries, within the framework of the Monterrey Consensus.

33. We reaffirm that the enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative provides an opportunity to strengthen the economic prospects and poverty reduction efforts of its beneficiary countries, thereby increasing food security. Speedy, effective and full implementation of the enhanced Initiative, which should be fully financed through additional resources, is critical. Heavily indebted poor countries should take the policy measures necessary to become eligible for the initiative.

34. We also reaffirm the Monterrey consensus to encourage exploring innovative mechanisms to address debt problems of developing countries, including middle-income countries and countries with economies in transition.

35. We call on all countries that have not yet done so, to consider signing and ratifying the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture in order that it shall enter into force as soon as possible.

Conclusions

The national reports show that countries have policies and programmes in place to implement the World Food Summit Plan of Action. However, the specific impact of each policy in regards to improving food security and reducing the number of the undernourished is seldom articulated in quantitative terms, making an analysis of progress difficult.

Only a limited number of countries have succeeded in reducing the number of undernourished. In a large number of countries the number of the undernourished has actually been growing. In their reports, many countries indicate a number of specific problems that affect their capacity to improve food security and reduce the number of people undernourished within the context of the World Food Summit Plan of Action.

Note: Explanatory notes on operative paragraphs 10 and 25 were communicated by Norway and a reservation to operative paragraph 10 was made by the United States of America. The full texts are recorded in the *Report of the World Food Summit: five years later*.

